

Prayer Meeting

Topic: COMPLETE IN HIM.

Cor. 2: 6-10.

For Week Ending April 4.

The doctrine of Christ, as the divine Redeemer, is the central doctrine of the Christian faith now, as it has ever been. Today, with an astuteness and a disguise that has scarcely, if ever, been equaled, this central citadel of truth is being assailed. Professed expositors of truth are its assailants. It becomes those who love the name which is above every name to jealously guard and invincibly defend this stronghold of the Church's hope and its very life. From our pulpits the testimony should be rung out over and over again, clearly, aggressively and confidently. It is the one message that will hold the Church in holy alliance with Omnipotence, revive hope in the hearts of our humanity and transform the earth.

By contact with paganism, Judaizing teachers at Colosse seem to have come under the delusion of a graduated system of deities, or higher order of beings whose mediatorial ministrations were to be sought and who were accordingly the objects of worship. The apostle tells them that such teachings are vain deceit, having their source in "the traditions of men" and "the rudiments of the world." The entire fulness of the God-head dwelt in Christ and in him those who believed were complete. For he is "head over all principality and power." Their very profession, whether they were Jews or Gentiles, was an acknowledgment of this. The fruits of his redemption in conquering sin was a proclamation of this truth, as for principalities and powers, that is the powerful spiritual organization of which the apostle speaks in Ephesians, when he says, "we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places," he spoiled them and made a show of them, openly triumphing over them in the cross.

The truth for us, then, is that Christ completely supplies our wants, meeting all legal and spiritual demands upon us, in himself. We are members of his mystical body; we are quickened and sanctified by his Spirit. He is "made of God, unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." He is the source of our knowledge, the ground of our acceptance, our deliverer from bondage, the author of our liberty, the giver of our victory, the fountain head of holiness and happiness. Man-made ordinances and traditions, the observance of days and ceremonials of human device, reflect upon his completeness and are an offense to him they are after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ. The mediation of saints and angels is of the very essence of idolatry. The worshippers of saints are the detractors of our Lord.

The spirit of Christianity prompts us to turn with aversion from human speculation, called "philosophy and vain deceit." The renewed soul hungers and thirsts for its Redeemer. That soul longs for his companionship, his counsel, his mighty intervention, the breathings of his love, the charm of his supreme personality, the tenderness of his sympathy, his wise and kindly ministration, his ever living intercession. That soul craves the most intimate, constant, vital and supreme communion with him, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

Prayer has been the preparation of every new triumph and the secret of all success of missions.

Young People's Society

RISEN WITH CHRIST.

Topic for Sunday, April 11: Risen With Christ. Colossians 3: 1-4.

DAILY READINGS.

Monday: The rising of the soul. Ephesians 2: 1-7.

Tuesday: A symbol of resurrection. Romans 6: 1-5.

Wednesday: Our new life. Colossians 2: 8-16.

Thursday: Resurrection power in us. Ephesians 1: 17-23.

Friday: The Risen Christ within. Romans 8: 9-14.

Saturday: The spiritual uprising. John 5: 24.

The resurrection was, to the apostles, both a doctrine and a fact. Its bearing upon the whole system of faith was to them significant and essential.

No man could be an apostle who was not a witness of the resurrection of Christ, through having seen him living subsequent to his passage into the grave.

When the eleven met to choose a successor to Judas, this qualification was clearly expressed, and two men were found to be eligible, and from these two Matthias was chosen by lot.

Paul stoutly maintained his apostleship on the ground of the risen Christ's revelation of himself to him. "I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." Some in Corinth had denied his apostleship.

The resurrection was the great declaration of God, that the atonement was complete and accepted. It was the high priest's return from the inner sanctuary, where he had gone with the blood of atonement upon his hands.

It was also the proof of the deity of the atoner, "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." In his sermon in Antioch, in Pisidia, Paul dwelt much on this. Read Acts 13.

But the sweetness of Christ's resurrection is in its relation to us. He became the first-fruits of them that slept. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. He ascended on high that he might give good gifts to men. Living in him we rise with him.

Our rising with him is the practical side to us of the fact and doctrine. It means present likeness to his life by a resurrection from the old conditions, which were those of death and death only.

It means certainty of eternal life and blessedness equal to the life and blessedness of Christ himself. "If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

It means the taking away of the fears that come into our soul at the thought of death and the grave. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But Christ, by his resurrection, has given us the victory over both sin and the grave. He passed safely through both. He will carry us safely through them.

It means a higher life here, as well as hereafter. "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above. Mortify your members which are upon the earth. Put on mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forgiveness, charity."

The word "rising" has a peculiar significance. It means coming up, getting higher, reaching a loftier plane, exaltation. It suggests elevation, progress, growth. One rising carries with him to the new situation all that he is and that he has and that he can do. There is such a thing as "the higher life." It begins as soon as Christ is born in the soul, "the hope of glory."